

RESEARCH ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

The Depiction of The Main Factors of Economic and Sociological Migration in John Steinbeck's Novel "Grapes of The Wrath" And Abdulla Kahhor's Work "Fairy Tales from The Past"

Bobojonova Shahlo Hakimovna

1st year master's student, Faculty of "Foreign Language Literature", University of Economics and Pedagogy, Uzbekistan

Received: 12 February 2025 **Accepted:** 13 March 2025 **Published:** 09 April 2025

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the causes of migration through a comparative study of John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" and Abdulla Kahhor's "Fairy Tales from the Past" ("Utmishdan ertaklar"). The main focus is on economic and social factors that push people to migrate. By employing the comparative-analytical method, the article examines how both authors depict the struggles of ordinary people against economic hardship, and social injustice. The analysis highlights the key themes in these works and links them to relevant scholarly studies. Personal insights are also offered regarding how these causes of migration are still relevant in the modern world.

Keywords: Migration, economic and social factors, comparative-analytical method, ordinary people, economic hardship, social injustice, personal insights, causes of migration, modern world.

INTRODUCTION

Migration is one of the most complex and urgent processes in human history. Indeed, throughout all periods, the process of migration from one place to another place has taken for various reasons. This movement has led to significant changes in people's lives and has brought about its own set of difficulties. Migration has consistently been one of the most pressing and important topics across all eras. Numerous writers in world literature have addressed this theme, exploring its diverse causes and complexities through their works. The reasons people move in search of a new life or flee from existing conditions are often linked to economic and social factors. These causes are also widely explored by various authors in world literature. These works examine the social, economic, and psychological effects of migration.

World literature works on the theme of migration.

There are some notable writers and their works on the subject. Gabriel Garcia Marquez highlights that immigration and its cultural and personal consequences are connected to the narrative in "One Hundred Years of Solitude". Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie depicts the challenges and personal growth of a protagonist, that is to say, a leading character who migrates from Nigeria to the United States by his novel "Americanah". The novel "The Namesake" explores the experiences of Indian immigrants and the struggles of finding one's identity in a new culture. This literary work was written by Jhumpa Lahiri as his first novel in 2003. He was inspired by her own experiences as the child of Indian immigrants grown up in America. In accordance with this, Isabel Allende, Khaled Hussein, Viet Thanh Nguyen, W.G. Sebald, Salman Rushdie, John Steinbeck, Elif Shafak provide profound insights into the multifaceted experiences of migrants, reflecting on themes

like identity, loss, adaptation, and resilience.

The interpretation of the theme of migration in works of Uzbek literature.

Moreover, in Uzbek literature a significant number of writers have contributed to the exploration of migration through their literary works, addressing its various aspects and implications. Abdulla Kahhor's "Saralash" ("Selection"), "Kushchinor chiroklari" ("Lights of Kushchinor"). They illustrate migration from villages to cities during the Soviet era, and the struggles of adapting to urban life, focusing cultural and social differences between rural and urban environments. Abdulla Kodiriy's works are "Utkan kunlar" ("Days by Gone"), "Mehrobdan chayon" ("Scorpion from the Alter") and they describe social and personal changes due to forced or voluntary migration in the context of historical events, emphasizing the emotional and societal impact of moving to new places. Sharaf Rashidov, Said Ahmad, Erkin A'zam and similar writers have created beautiful works on migration as well. These authors have deeply explored the emotional, social and cultural impacts on migrations in their stories. Their works have resonated with global audience, leading to translations into different languages, allowing the themes of displacement and adaptation to reach readers beyond Uzbekistan.

The theme of migration has continuously attracted the attention of writers throughout diverse eras and has been depicted in various forms. In this article, the most crucial aspects of migration, namely its social and economic characteristics, are analyzed using a comparative-analytical method. This method helps to reveal the causes of migration depicted in the works of John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" and Abdulla Kahhor's "Utmishdan ertaklar" (Fairy Tales from the Past) and linking them to relevant scholarly studies. Their literary works provide deep insights into the reasons for migration in their periods.

Social and economical reasons of migration in John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath.

In Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath", the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl of the 1930s forced tenant farmers in the Midwest to migrate westward. Landowners and banks implemented mechanization, displacing small-scale farmers, including the Joad family. This economic hardships and injustice are among the main causes of migration. In "The Grapes of Wrath", Steinbeck illustrates

that farmers are forced to leave their lands in search of new opportunities as a result of The Great Depression and the Dust Bowl: "The bank – or the company – needs, wants, insists, must have – as though the bank or the company were a monster, with thought and feeling, which had ensnared them. These last would take no responsibility for the banks and companies, because they were men and slaves, while the banks were machines and masters all at the same time." The Joad family and other migrant workers are driven from Oklahoma to California in search of a better life. However, upon arrival, they face exploitative labour conditions and poverty. Previous studies have shown that Steinbeck critiques the capitalist system, exposing how economic policies during the Great Depression exacerbated the suffering of ordinary people. Here, the harshness of the capitalist system is depicted. In examining Steinbeck's novel, Western scholar Tomas Cruz critiques the impact of capitalism on farmers: "Steinbeck exposes the harsh realities of capitalism through the struggles of ordinary farmers." Prior research confirms that economic reasons continue to be a major driver of migration today. Unemployment and poverty push people to move in search of better prospects. Social inequality and injustice are also significant causes of migration. In Steinbeck's novel, the exploitation of farmers forces them to look for new opportunities, Steinbeck depicts the alienation and marginalization of migrant workers who are treated as outsiders in California: "They ain't human. A human being wouldn't live like they do. A human being couldn't stand to be so dirty." In the work of "The Grapes of Wrath" you can come across following sentences: "In agriculture, whoever was in power was opposed by everyone else." Western scholar Mary Johnson highlights how Steinbeck's novel critiques the social inequalities in capitalism. "The Grapes of Wrath is a vivid depiction of the social inequalities under capitalism."

The data suggest that Steinbeck emphasizes the resilience and solidarity among migrants, showing how shared suffering fosters a sense of community. However, the novel also reveals the harsh realities of human greed and indifference in the face of widespread suffering. And Steinbeck critiques the capitalist system that prioritizes profits over human welfare, portraying how economic instability can strip people of their homes, dignity, and hope.

Economic collapse and social factors in Fairy Tales from the Past (Utmishdan ertaklar) of Abdulla Kahhor.

In “Utmishdan ertaklar” (“Fairy Tales from the Past”), the economic inequality and the issue of land ownership are central: “During the Soveit era, for us peasants, every day was filled with darkness.” In his study of Abdulla Kahhor’s work, Normatov Umid notes that the difficult economic situation of the peasants and their migration are thoroughly analyzed: “In Kahhor’s works, economic inequality is portrayed as the root of social conflicts.” Abdulla Kahhor reflects on the economic struggles of the Uzbek peasants under the feudal and early Soviet systems. Landowners controlled resources, leaving little for the working class. For example: “Whoever controlled the land had everything, but the real workers could get nothing”. Kahhor portrays the exploitation of peasants, who often migrated to escape starvation and seek fairer opportunities. In his analysis of Kahhor’s works, Kushjonov Matyokub notes the portrayal of mismanagement of natural resources: “Kahhor’s stories uncover issues such as the unequal distribution and misuse of natural resources. His stories offer an artistic explanation of the oppression and poverty, shedding light on the hardships of ordinary people. One instance of the situations is the scene in *The Master*, where a laborer who has been searching for work goes to the city and finds himself compelled to knock on every door in search of sustenance. This situation vividly illustrates the overwhelming influence of ignorance and poverty on the protagonist’s life.” In the present day, global climate change, droughts, and environmental crises are accelerating migration worldwide whereas in Kahhor’s tale, the social stratification of the feudal system is depicted. Regarding Kahhor’s works, Normatov Umid explains how they reflect the consequences of feudal social systems: “Kahhor’s works analyze the social inequalities and injustices inherent in the feudal system.” This investigation demonstrates that reducing social inequality and injustice could help mitigate the migration flow.

Comparative analysis of both works.

If we compare these works of John Steinbeck and Abdulla Kahhor based on comparative analysis, these two works delve deeply into the causes of migration. I can say following some of the similarities of them: economic inequality is presented as a key cause in given works; social injustice and unequal landownership are central themes in them. At the same time, I would like to point out the differences between these products. Steinbeck emphasizes economical issues and critiques capitalism. And the most important difference is that John Steinbeck expresses each situation openly in his artifact. According

to the cultural and temporal contexts, Steinbeck’s work is rooted in the capitalist and industrial realities of 1930s in America. Author addresses how systemic oppression transcends cultural and historical boundaries, highlighting migration as a universal human experience. In “*The Grapes of Wrath*”, the Joads embody resilience and hope for a better future, despite systemic challenges. In this novel, human struggles for dignity are highlighted by collective resistance and community support among migrants.

Kahhor focuses more on resource distribution and social class disparities. He draws attention to the problems within the feudal system. Although he had to reveal each situation figuratively in that period, his stories reflect the feudal and transitional Soviet systems of Central Asia. Abdulla Kahhor also informs about how systematized persecution rise above cultural and historical bounds. Kahhor takes a bleaker approach, showing how migration often exacerbates poverty and despair. Despite that Kahhor concentrates on individual struggles and the moral dilemmas faced by migrants in urban settings.

SCIENTIFIC CONCLUSION

Both of the pieces of literature, “*The Grapes of Wrath*” and “*Utmishdan ertaklar*” (“Fairy Tales from the Past”) offer valuable insights into the economic and social reasons for migration. Steinbeck’s critique of capitalist exploitation and Kahhor’s depiction of feudal oppression highlight the systemic forces that compel migration. These works underscore the universal themes of poverty, inequality, and human resilience in the face of adversity. Their relevance extends beyond their historical contexts, providing critical perspectives on contemporary migration issues. By comparing these literary texts through economic and sociological lenses, it becomes evident that migration is not merely a choice but often a necessity dictated by structural inequalities. This interdisciplinary approach enhances our understanding of migration as a deeply human phenomenon with profound social, economic, and cultural implications.

In general conclusion according to my research, “*The Grapes of Wrath*” by John Steinbeck portrays migration as a deeply human struggle fueled by systemic economic and social injustices as well as “*Utmishdan ertaklar*” (“*The Fairy Tales from the Past*”) by Abdulla Kahhor. Despite being written in different historical and cultural contexts, these works share striking parallels in their depiction of forced migration as a consequence of poverty, exploitation,

and inequality. Steinbeck critiques the capitalist greed and mechanization that displace vulnerable farmers during the Great Depression, whilst Kahhor examines the feudal oppression and social hierarchy that push rural workers to seek better opportunities. The two of the authors emphasize the devastating impact of migration on families and communities, highlighting the emotional, physical, and social toll it takes on individuals. However, the authors also present a glimmer of hope. Steinbeck focuses on the solidarity and resilience among migrants, but Kahhor showcases the enduring strength of the human spirit amidst injustice. Together, these works serve as a universal critique of socio-economic systems that prioritize power and profit over human welfare. They remind readers of the urgent need for systemic reform, empathy, and solidarity to address the root cause of migration and build a more equitable society.

REFERENCES

Steinbeck, J. 1939. *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Kahhor, A. 1958. *Utmishdan ertaklar* (*The Fairy Tales from Past*).

Normatov, U. 2020. *The Works of Abdulla Kahhor in Uzbek Literature History*.

Kushjonov, M. 2015. *Social Inequality in Kahhor's Works*.

Palmer, P. 2015. *Environmental Crisis and Migration in The Grapes of Wrath*.

Johnson, M. 2016. *Social Inequality in Steinbeck's Novels*.

Cruz, T. 2018. *The Economic Struggles of Farmers in The Grapes of Wrath*.